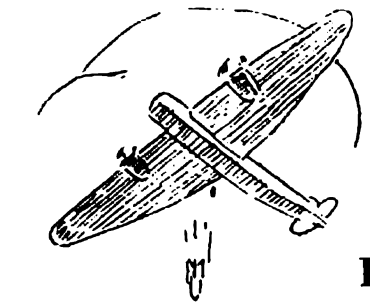
Children's Cities in Spain



BUILDING CHILDREN'S CITIES

Let us talk together quietly about the Spanish children.

Tragedy has perhaps become commonplace. When the skies rain bombs on civilians for a year, and then a second, and then a third, people do not always think of more than 3,000,000 children for whom this is "normal" life.

The food supply is rigidly limited. But the image of pinched, gaunt baby faces; the image of possible starvation among a generation sometimes seems to fade from memory.

Whole towns are razed. Orphans huddle in subways fearful to face the day lest strange "lightning" strike them. Warm coats, woolen sweaters and other garments children need are hard to produce.

Spanish childhood is in its third winter of war. This is the worst of the three because supplies are lower. It is the worst because unprotected, undernourished bodies do not easily resist disease when snow falls and the temperature drops.

But the plight of children in the overcrowded cities and villages of Spain goes beyond the question of food and clothing. It touches on the children's social surroundings and sanitary and health facilities, their need for supervised education, recreation and social guidance, if they are to be reclaimed from the horrors of war, and grow into healthy, useful citizens.

It is for this reason that the Spanish Government has given the greatest attention to formulating and putting into effect a plan which will result in a mass solution of some of the difficulties which beset Spain's childhood today.

Despite the fact that numerous colonies have been established in various parts of Government Spain, it has only been possible to care for the most needy children in an extremely limited way, and the tragic situation of Spain's boys and girls demands that aid be given to thousands.

In order to accomplish this, the Spanish Government in cooperation with some of the foremost child experts in Europe, has developed a plan for the establishment of Children's Cities, created exclusively for children between the ages of 8 and 14 years. The Children's Cities plan makes it possible to care for at least one thousand children in a single project with complete educational, recreational and housing facilities.

The sites selected for these Children's Cities, which are to be laid out according to plans formulated by the Paris Federation of Architects, are in areas far removed from danger of bombardment and the character of these lilliputian settlements will be truly international. Virtually all the material for their construction must come from abroad and every pavilion will fly the flag of the country which makes it possible and provides for its support.

The Children's Cities, the magnitude of their scope and the long range relief they will administer constitute perhaps the most im-

portant single item in the program of aid for the Spanish children today.

More than 3,000,000 children, many of them refugees and war orphans must be cared for, if Spain is to escape a horrible repetition of scenes which followed the World War, when hordes of "wild" boys and girls roamed through many devastated European countries in search of the most meagre necessities.

SPAIN'S CHILDREN ARE BEING WARRED AGAINST!!

THESE CHILDREN ARE HUNGRY!! THESE CHILDREN ARE COLD!! THESE CHILDREN ARE HOMELESS!!

THEY ASK FOR YOUR HELP!!

A LILLIPUTIAN COMMUNITY

The careful and intelligent thought that has gone into the planning of Children's Cities is amply demonstrated by the detailed schedule which has been received from Spain. Aside from the practical contribution which the Spanish Government is making to its own youth and to the entire problem of child welfare work, the Children's Cities project in all of its fascinating details gives ample indication of the consideration and courage of a people beset by civil war, invasion, and famine.

There is no American mother, teacher, or social worker, indeed there is no human being, who will not read with sympathy the plans for an entire model community devoted exclusively to the care of boys and girls.

Division of Work:

Life and organization in the "Children's City" are planned on a community basis, the children cooperating in the whole program with the aid and support of the personnel.

Obviously, certain services cannot be placed in the hands of the children. These will be handled by a qualified adult personnel. Admission, administration, health — everything concerning the operation of the kitchen, distribution of the linen and laundry— these will be supervised by the personnel with the help and cooperation of the children.

Children will play a definite role in the functioning of the "City" through limited personal work. This, of course, will be in line with tasks for which their age suits them and which carry a certain educational character at the same time

They will be responsible for:

General maintenance

Cleanliness of dormitories and various other buildings

Care of gardens and walks

Laundry, with the exception of heavy linen.

They will also be responsible for a part of the food supply through the cultivation of vegetables.

They will also assist (on a rotating system and in a limited manner) with work in the kitchen, laundry, and linen and repair departments.

They can, in a certain measure, even participate in the repair and upkeep of the buildings and in this way, to some extent, directly apply the vocational shop training they receive in school.

Thus, each child will find for himself some kind of professional work which will permit him to participate in the collective life of the "City."

Apart from the work and study developed for the particular tastes and aptitudes of the children, life in the "City" will be based entirely on collective action.

It is indispensable, for the organization of this collective life, to plan a system of operation under which each group of children, or unit, selects a child from within its unit to serve for a limited period as a "responsable," with the collaboration of the adult personnel.

The unit as such will be concerned chiefly with the question of sleeping and eating. The plan fixes the number of children in a unit at 25, including the "responsable." The entire "City," therefore, would be composed of 40 units. The unit will be as small as possible in view of (1) the duties assumed by the "responsable"; (2) the need of leading the children to safety as swiftly as possible in case of bombardments (even though all possible guarantees are being established to avoid bombardments); and (3) to facilitate the task of the "responsable" and the adult staff.

The daily tasks of the children will be based on a rotating system, two units working under one supervising adult. Thus the unit of 25 children is at the same time the best maximum and the best minimum.

Education in physical culture will also be a part of the collective life. This will be carried out in units, or groups of units, under the direction of the supervising staff and the medical personnel.

Education:

Once the physical needs have been satisfied and shelter has been provided, the main concern will be to make the "Cities" centers of education. Here the children will be able to find professional and even specialized instruction. Mutual education will go hand in hand with personal study, and will be under the direct supervision and guidance of the teaching staff. The children must have all the materials and equipment required (workshops, libraries, etc.) for their program of education. The children will be responsible, moreover, for the good care and maintenance of all the tools, books, supplies, etc.

The method of mutual education will also be applied in the workshop and in the garden, with a professional guide permanently

assigned to each phase of the work. That is, one to supervise repairs to buildings and the other to be in charge of general food supplies.

Instruction in Domestic Science (sewing, ironing, cooking, laundry), will be based on useful, practical application and under the supervision of the personnel charged with these duties. The teaching will be carried on in the very buildings where these services are rendered.

It will be necessary, especially from a professional point of view to plan classes and periodic lectures before fairly large groups to avoid undue duplication. In this way a small number of specialists can provide instruction for several "Children's Cities" at one time.

LIFE AND FUNCTIONING OF THE CITY

With a view to applying the principles already established, the following program has been developed. By reading this, we are able to get a glimpse of a typical day in the life of a child in a "Children's City."

1. Lodging:

For shelter the children will be divided into 40 dormitories, with 25 children in each dormitory. Dormitories are in pairs, each pair sharing one recreation room and one lavatory. A room nearby will house the supervising adult. In addition, there will be several double-size pavilions which will each house 50 children.

Each group of 25 or 50, as the case may be, will have its own collective life, for which the child chosen as "responsable" will be in charge. This child will watch over the cleanliness of the rooms occupied by the group or unit and will stimulate the collective participation of the children in the activities.

2. Food:

Breakfast will be served in the dormitories. The other two meals will be served in the dining-rooms where there will be two sittings of 500 children each.

3. Hygiene:

a. *Washing*—Morning and evening washings in the wash-rooms of the dormitories.

b. *Showers*—Each child will receive a shower every five days. Groups will rotate—200 children using the showers each evening. Showers shall be taken between 4 and 6:15 p.m.

c. *Change of Linen*—Each child has, in his individual locker, his supply of linen and a change of clothing. Linen and clothing are changed on the rest day.

4. Physical Culture:

Children shall be given a half-hour of physical culture exercises every morning, under the direction of a trained instructor.

5. Medical Supervision and Care:

Each child shall receive a medical examination every 10 days, after physical culture. Children who become ill will be confined to the infirmary and medical consultations held for them each morning.

6. Maintenance:

This includes organized assistance by the children in the upkeep of the establishment along with the adult personnel and covers the following services:

(a) Help in the kitchen

(b) Help with laundry

(c) Agricultural work

(d) Other miscellaneous work

(a) KITCHEN WORK: Fifty children are assigned daily for assistance in the kitchen—25 in the morning and 25 in the evening. Special rotation is provided for rest days.

(b) LAUNDRY WORK: Again two units daily of 25 each, one in the morning, one in the afternoon, except on rest day.

(c) AGRICULTURAL WORK: In addition to working in the fields which the children do in the morning as part of their agricultural education, there is the feeding of animals which must be done in the afternoon. One unit is assigned daily to the afternoon work, and on rest days one unit for morning and one for afternoon.

(d) OTHER MISCELLANEOUS WORK: Here may be classified all other work affecting the functioning of the "City": Help in various services such as printing, library, admissions, cleaning-up and maintenance. Such help shall take place in the morning and occupy 50 children, or two units. On rest day, however, one unit is sufficient.

7. *Academic and Vocational Education—Farming:*

Educational work is carried on in the morning and includes workshop and schoolroom work.

Instruction continues throughout the practical work which the children do and which provides opportunity for application of theoretical knowledge.

Workshop and schoolroom work is carried on every morning except on the rest day.

On the day of its medical visit each unit spends the rest of the morning at study.

On rest days the meeting room of each pavilion may be used for study and reading.

Every morning units which are free from other work go to the fields for agricultural training and exercise, and in this way provide a part of the food they eat. There will thus be 16 units at work in the fields every day.

8. Recreation—Sports—Games:

In general, the afternoons will be given over to sports, games and recreation. The day of rest will be devoted entirely to this purpose.

Certain units, however, will be engaged in activities which come under the head of work of general interest and will not participate in sports and games every afternoon.

The chart below indicates what an average day should be like:

6:30 A.M.	Wake up, wash, dress.
	Put dormitories in order.
	Breakfast in dormitory.
	Report by "responsable."
7:30 to 8:00	Physical culture.
8:00 to 12:00	Division of work according to rotating system.
	Medical examination.
	Education.

12:00 to 1:30 Luncheon (two sittings).

1:30 to 4:00 Siesta, rest.

4:00 to 6:15 Showers or sports.

6:15 Meeting of "responsables"; general meetings when necessary. Cinemas, distribution of linen, recreation, rest, etc., depending on the days.

7:30 to 8:00 Dinner (two sittings).

8:00 to 9:00 Rest, reading, meeting of each unit, distribution of mail, report by the "responsable" on the accomplishments and work of the day.

9:00 Bed hour.

MAKE THEIR "CASTLES IN SPAIN" COME TRUE

The story of the Children's Cities is told. They must seem like dream cities to the little ones who drag out their nightmare existence in shell-torn towns today.

But we in America are determined to make these cities real. Behind the battle lines, walls will rise and roofs will be raised to shelter the young victims of modern barbarism. The fate of an entire generation is in our hands. In the American Pavilion, under the American flag, the boys and girls of ravaged Spain will find protection and tender care. We pledge ourselves to this great work of healing in the spirit of human fellowship.

Funds are urgently needed to fulfill the task. The construction costs for each city of 1,000 children are $81,000. The sum of $81, therefore, guarantees for one Spanish war orphan a home where nourishing food, books and toys and expert guidance will be his.

TO BUILD THE AMERICAN PAVILION ACCOMMODATING 300 CHILDREN, REQUIRES APPROXIMATELY $24,000. We ask you to assume a share of this cost. A child's whole life is at stake. Each $81 received in this campaign will rescue another Spanish child from terror and hunger. Remember that every dollar, every penny, counts. Groups of friends, donating in common, can provide sufficient funds to care for one or more homeless, hungry waifs. If every man and woman who is stirred by the sufferings of Spanish childhood will contribute even a coin, the sum of $81 will be realized many times over. Think what it means for a child to starve, to freeze, to die for lack of care! We appeal to you on behalf of a whole generation of Spanish children.

GIVE TODAY! RAISE WALLS OF PROTECTION AROUND THE INNOCENT VICTIMS OF FASCIST AGGRESSION. HELP BUILD THE AMERICAN PAVILION OF THE FIRST CHILDREN'S CITY IN SPAIN!

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MEDICAL BUREAU AND NORTH AMERICAN COMMITTEE
TO AID SPANISH DEMOCRACY

National Office: 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City

I enclose $..... ($81, $162, etc.) to provide for..... (one, two, etc.) Spanish child in the American pavilion of the first Children's City.

I enclose $.....towards an American pavilion to house 300 Spanish boys and girls in a Children's City.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....*State*.....